

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 01787 200656Z  
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 IO-14 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CIAE-00 COME-00  
INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07 TRSE-00 FRB-01  
OMB-01 PA-02 ICA-20 /082 W  
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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 101  
INFO USMISSION GENEVA  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 1787

GENEVA FOR PHELAN

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: ETRD, SN, US  
SUBJECT: SINGAPORE PRESS COMMENT ON "DEVELOPING"  
U. S. TEXTILE INDUSTRY

1. SINGAPORE'S BUSINESS DAILY NEWSPAPER EDITORIALIZED  
APRIL 20 ON PLIGHT OF U. S. TEXTILE INDUSTRY. EDITORIAL  
WAS REMARKABLY SYMPATHETIC, SAYING THAT OVERALL  
DEVELOPED STATUS OF U. S. ECONOMY DOES NOT NECESSARILY  
MEAN THAT ALL SECTORS AND ALL WORKERS ARE EQUALLY  
AFFLUENT.

2. SEPARATE NEWS STORY (UNSOURCED) DESCRIBED CARTER  
ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS TO DEFLECT PRESSURE BY U. S.  
TEXTILE INDUSTRY AND UNIONS TO EXCLUDE THAT INDUSTRY  
FROM GENEVA MTN.

3. TEXT OF EDITORIAL FOLLOWS:  
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"DEVELOPED CAN STILL MEAN DEVELOPING.  
"THE WELL-DEFINED LINE DIVIDING DEVELOPED  
COUNTRIES ON THE ONE HAND AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES  
ON THE OTHER IS SOMETIMES FACILE. THE TEXTILE  
INDUSTRIES OF COUNTRIES FORCED INTO THE CATEGORIES  
ON EITHER SIDE OF THE LINE IS A CASE IN POINT.  
"IN THE US, THE LARGE NUMBERS OF WORKERS

EMPLOYED BY ITS TEXTILE INDUSTRY ARE NOT PART OF THE WELL-FED, AVERAGE AMERICAN FAMILIES THAT COME SO EASILY TO MIND. THEY COMPRIZE LARGELY THE MINORITIES AND THE LATE IMMIGRANTS, MOSTLY WITH STANDARDS OF LIVING WHICH, ON A RELATIVE SCALE OF INCOMES AND EXPENDITURES, ARE COMPARABLE WITH THOSE OF THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN HONG KONG OR SINGAPORE.

"THE ARGUMENT THAT THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY, BEING A LABOR-INTENSIVE INDUSTRY, IS BEST SUITED TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES DOES NOT, THEREFORE, HOLD ABSOLUTELY. EVEN AMERICA NEEDS LABOR INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES TO ABSORB A LARGE SEGMENT OF ITS POPULATION WHICH, EVEN NOW, ARE NOT REALLY PART OF THE BRIGHT, WELL-POLISHED IMAGE OF DEVELOPED AMERICA.

"THE SAME ANACHRONISMS CAN BE FOUND IN FRANCE, THE UK, EVEN WEST GERMANY. A COUNTRY CANNOT EASILY PHASE OUT AN INDUSTRY ON WHICH ONE OF EVERY EIGHT OF ITS WORKERS, AS IN THE US, DEPENDS.

"PERHAPS A COUNTRY AS STRONG AS THE US CAN, THEORETICALLY, SUPPORT A MASSIVE RISE IN THE RANKS OF ITS UNEMPLOYED IN ORDER TO KEEP THE WHEELS OF INDUSTRY TURNING IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD. BUT THAT IS NOT, IN THE END, THE BEST ECONOMIC DECISION TO MAKE. POLITICALLY, IT WOULD BE NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE.

"THE REALIZATION THAT, AS FAR AS THE TEXTILE  
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WORLD IS CONCERNED, THERE ARE "DEVELOPING" SECTORS NEARLY EVERYWHERE TAKES SOME OF THE MORAL STING OUT OF THE CRY FOR LESS PROTECTIONISM. BUT IT SERVES TO underscore JUST HOW COMPLEX THIS WORLD IS."

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: NO DOUBT THE CONCLUSION OF US-SINGAPORE BILATERAL TEXTILE AGREEMENT HAS INFLUENCED SINGAPORE TO LOOK A BIT MORE UNDERSTANDINGLY ON PROBLEMS OF US TEXTILE INDUSTRY. ICA RECENTLY DISTRIBUTED NEWS STORY BY ONE OF ITS STAFF WRITERS DESCRIBING PROBLEMS IN THE US INDUSTRY AND THIS MAY ALSO HAVE INFLUENCED PAPER'S EDITOR. WHILE THIS EDITORIAL IS MOST EMPHATICALLY NOT A HARBINGER OF A MORE RELAXED GOS ATTITUDE TOWARD PROTECTIONISM IN GENERAL, IT DOES SERVE TO UNDERSCORE PRAGMATIC WORLD VIEW OF SINGAPOREAN LEADERS.  
HOLDRIDGE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, TEXTILE INDUSTRY, INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Subject:** SINGAPORE PRESS COMMENT ON \"DEVELOPING\" U. S. TEXTILE INDUSTRY  
**TAGS:** ETRD, SOPN, EIND, SN, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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